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What motivates eurosceptic voters in net-payer and net-receiver EU member states?

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Abstract:

This paper investigates what motivates four dimensions of Euroscepticism in 28 member states of the European Union. The sample is split between net-payer and receiver countries with respect to the EU budget. All dimensions of scepticism are found to be heavily concentrated among the political left in receiver countries, while both political extremes are more instrumentally eurosceptic and dissatisfied with the current EU in payer countries. There is, however, an increased probability that the political right in receiver countries will become more eurosceptic based on their opposition to immigration.

Keywords: Euroscepticism, European Union, public opinion, mixed effects

1. Introduction

The European project is on the verge of collapse. Support for the European Union (EU) has been declining steadily and the absence of political support for the Union has been a topic of scholarly debate since a long time, grouped under the term "Euroscepticism". Recent events like the Brexit, the EU's inability to work together in the refugee crisis, and the rise of many anti-European movements in different countries make painfully clear that this is a real problem which must be addressed to prevent the EU from failing completely. It is evident that the European populace is divided along some lines. Which factors exactly determine a person's Euroscepticism, however, is a current topic of interest. Fact is that faced with complicated issues like the high influx of refugees into Europe and the consequences of the financial crisis

that are still very pronounced in many regions voters seem to have become more receptive to the populist message of easy solutions than they have been for a long time.

The increasing success of Eurosceptic parties poses a real danger to the European project and so far, there is no solution in sight. Van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) have formulated the theory of the "sleeping giant", which postulates that the European populace is indeed divided on European issues and that the right political entrepreneur could gather support by making these issues more salient to the greater public. There have been various studies that aim at explaining public Euroscepticism as well as the role political parties play and their stance on European issues. However, most papers have studied either different types of Euroscepticism on a sample of a few specific countries, or they have studied general Eurosceptic trends in all EU member states. This papers aims to present an integrated approach to the problem by including the different concepts of Euroscepticism that have been developed, as well as the main explanatory theories. Furthermore, it includes observations from all 28 member countries of the EU and accounts for intra country variability by fitting random effects models for the respective variables of interest.

Oftentimes opposition to European integration has been attributed to an individual's ideological stand; both extremes, the ideological left and right are assumed to be more Eurosceptic, the left for economic and the right for identity and cultural reasons (Hooghe & Marks, 2005; De Vries & Edwards, 2009; Van Elsas, Hakhverdian, & Van der Brug, 2016). While several authors have tested interaction effects between left/right placement and various other variables, to our knowledge it has not been tested so far how the impact of left/right placement differs between European countries. This paper investigates this issue by diferring between net payer and receiver countries, which are expected to have a different political landscape.

The rest of the paper is organised in the following way. In section 2 an overview of the different classifications of Euroscepticism is provided, along with the theoretic underpinnings. Third, it presents the main theories that have been used to explain the different forms of Euroscepticism and the hypotheses that will be tested thereafter are presented in section four. Next, an overview over the data and variables is given, to then, sixth, present the empirical analysis. Section 7 discusses the results and the eighth and final one provides a conclusion.

2. Forms of Euroscepticism

The earlier studies of public opinion on European integration usually focused on what has been termed *Instrumental Euroscepticism*. The metric used to represent this form of scepticism is the answer to the question whether a respondent's country has benefitted from its EU membership, or whether its membership is a good or a bad thing. As Lubbers and Scheepers (2005) show, there is at least a second dimension to Euroscepticism that varies amongst countries and regions, which is labelled *Political Euroscepticism*. In contrast to *Instrumental Euroscepticism* it measures whether a respondent wants to shift decision making power for a certain policy from the European to the national or regional level.

The first type of Euroscepticism is clearly related to some kind of cost-benefit analysis; the respondent is urged to evaluate whether the EU has benefitted his country or is in some way good for it. Although it is not specified in the question this type of analysis is usually taken to be an economic one (Gabel, 1998; Lubbers et al. 2005), in which an individual thinks about the ways in which the EU has economically or financially benefitted his country. The second type of Euroscepticism, on the other hand, is not as clearly related to economic issues. Since its creation the EU has broadened its scope of government considerably, now encompassing nearly every domain of politics. Because of the multitude of policies the EU is or could be involved, there are some that generally receive more support for Europeanisation than others. Several

different classifications have been put forward as to how policies should grouped, but the tenor is that there are some that are "inherently international" and therefore naturally respondents are more likely to think they should be decided upon at the European level (Dalton & Eichenberg, 1998; Gabel & Anderson, 2002; Lubbers et al., 2005; Magalhães, 2012a). Which policies exactly belong to that category is up for debate, but some that are consistently mentioned by various scholars are Agriculture, Crime, and Environment[1]. The policies that receive least average support for Europeanisation are those that involve high government spending, like social programs (Hooghe, 2003). Although these differences in average support exist, it is now scientific consensus that an individual that wants to transfer one policy to the European level is also more likely to want so for any other policy (Lubbers et al., 2005; Magalhães, 2012b). Support for Europeanisation can therefore be taken to be a single dimension, which, according to previous research, weakly correlates with *Instrumental Euroscepticism*.

These different cosiderations concerning Euroscepticism give rise to two further concepts: output-oriented and input-oriented legitimacy. When asked whether its country's membership in the EU is a good thing or not, a respondent is urged to think about what the union has done for him or his country, in what ways it has benefitted him. If he thinks the EU has had a positive impact on his country, this confirms the EU's output-oriented legitimacy. On the other hand, the decision wether to transfer policy-making powers to the EU hinges on the respondent's opinion on what the EU *should* be in charge of, without necessarily having proven its efficacy in that area. This input-oriented legitimacy is of crucial importance for the future of the European project, because the EU can only expand its competencies in areas in which it receives public support (Magalhães, 2012a). Because the transfer of political power to the EU necessarily involves partly giving up national sovereignty in a wide array of areas, it is likely not based on economic but rather political considerations.

[1] See Magalhães, 2012b for a summary

Most of the recent research on Euroscepticism makes the distinction between these two dimensions, although there are various authors that acknowledge the possibility that there might be other components of support for the European project that vary independently from these two dimensions (Magalhães, 2012a). Van Elsas et al. (2016), for example, use dissatisfaction with the EU and opposition to EU strengthening to measure Euroscepticism among the citizens of 14 Western European democracies. Dissatisfaction is constructed as a combined index of trust in the EU and the EU's external efficacy and Opposition is based on the question wether EU unification has already gone too far or should be pushed further. While these concepts share some features with the two previously described, there are some important difference which makes it plausible to treat Euroscepticism as a four dimensional.

Although both *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisfaction* cause the respondent to think about what the EU has achieved for him or his country, the instrumental dimension is more general and the design of the question is more likely to cause a cost-benefit analysis. The external efficacy part of dissatisfaction is based on the question wether "the European Parliament takes into consideration the concerns of European citizens", which, just like trust, is more clearly linked to a specific institution of the EU. Furthermore, it is easy to imagine that dissatisfaction is based on other cosiderations than purely economic ones. A respondent might reasonably think his country's membership in the EU is a good thing, for example because of fiscal transfers, but still distrust the European Parliament, possibly because he thinks that there is a democratic deficit and he is not properly represented in that Parliament. Similarly, *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition* both cause considerations about the future of the union, but while the political dimension asks about specific policies and their Europeanisation, supporting further EU strengthening or not refers to some kind of "ideal" EU, likely to be based on principles rather than specific political considerations.

3. Explaining Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism amongst political parties has been studied a lot more extensively than amongst the public and has repeatefly described as an "inverted U" with the political extremes being more Eurosceptic (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002; De Vries and Edwards, 2009). This division between the political left and right can be expected to be replicated at the individual level, because these political dimensions are based on values that constitute part of a certain worldview, which can be expected to be shared by parties and individuals. The previously mentioned paper, however, investigates only one aspect of Euroscepticism, so the question is how ideology affects the four dimensions under scrutiny in this paper. To answer that we must analyse how motivations for eurosceptic attitudes differ between left and right-wing voters. Left-wing parties traditionally emphasise economic and social issues while they welcom multiculturalism. Right-wing parties, on the other hand tend to oppose multiculturalism and rally voters based on national identity considerations (De Vries and Edwards, 2009). To assess the impact that left/right placement has on the different dimensions of Euroscepticism, one has to differentiate between net-payer and net-receiver countries. In line with Van Elsas et al. (2016) we hypothesise that the relationship between *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisaction* and left/right placement is curvilinear in net-payer countries. However, we expect that citizens on the extreme left score higher on *Instrumental Euroscepticism*, because this is the dimension that is most strongly connected to economic considerations. As explained above, dissatifaction might be based on other motivations, so we expect the left and right extremes to be equally dissatisfied in net-payer countries. Because of the economic situation that most of the net-receiver countries are in, we hypothesise that the left scores higher on both dimensions of Euroscepticism. Many of the countries in this group have had to bear strict austerity measure imposed by the EU over the last decades. This has caused many citizens to blame the union for the dismantling or defunding of many social welfare programs, leading to

an increase in perceived clarity of responsibility. Consequently, economic voting against the EU has become more salient, causing respondents to base dissatisfaction on economic considerations.

Concerning *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition*, we again follow Van Elsas et al. (2016) for net-payer countries. Citizens on the political right are expected to want the EU to have less policy making powers and to be more resistant to further unification, because both dimensions capture fear of loss of sovereignty, immigration, and multiculturalism. While voters on the left perceive the EU as an opportunity to put in place social and redistributive policies that they favour, the right perceives it as a threat to their identity and culture. We therefore expect a linear relationship between these two dimensions of Euroscepticism and left/right placement in net-payer countries. In net-receiver countries, on the other hand, we again must take into consideration that economic perceptions are intricatly linked with the EU. Although right-wing sentiments against immigrants are on the rise in these countries too, most of the opposition to the EU stems from left-wing citizens. It is likely that the continued austerity measures that many net-receiver countries had to endure due to the EU have disillusioned voters on the left, so that they do not perceive the union as an appropriate instrument to put in place their social agenda anymore. Therefore, we hypothesise that the relationship between *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition* and left/right placement is curvilinear in net-receiver countries, with left-wing citizens scoring higher on both dimensions.

In addition to the simple left/right placement we introduce two additional ideological indicators into the analysis, which are support for redistributive or for anti-immigration policies. These items have the advantage that they are independent measurements of socioeconomic and cultural attitudes, respectively. Because eurosceptic, populistic parties in many countries aim and achieve to draw voters from both extremes of the political spectrum, it is likely that issues that lie at the heart of either extreme have a strong effect on Euroscepticism. While support for

redistribution is likely to be stronger amongst left-wing voters and vice-versa for opposition to immigration, the separate inclusion of these indicators enables us to asses their effects independently. In net-payer countries, we expect support for redistribution to be positively related to *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisfaction*, and negatively related to *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition*. However, in net-receiver countries, support for redistribution is expected to be positively related to all four dimensions of Euroscepticism. Opposition to immigration, on the other hand, is hypothesised to show a positive relationship with all dimensions in both net-payer and receiver countries. Citizens that fear multiculturalism and loss of identity are likely to blame the Eu for the effects of increased immigration that has already happened, as well as oppose further EU strengthening.

As becomes clear from section two, one important determinant of Euroscepticism, especially instrumental and dissatisfaction, is some form of economic consideration. The connection between the economy and voter behaviour is at the heart of Political Economy and has been subject of investigation since its beginnings. Economic considerations can be based on perceptions or on objective facts, and they can refer to a respondent's personal economic stance or the economic condition of his country. This results in four dimensions of economic theory, which are the respondent's objective personal economic situation, his perception thereof, the objective state of his country's economy, and again his perception. Furthermore, each dimension can be retrospective or prospective. Because of the multitude of possibilities and the different indicators available for all items we only present the ones that are applied in this paper. In accordance with previous research we expect economic anxiety, egocentric and sociotropic perceptions of the economy, to be positively related to all kinds of Euroscepticism, however more so to *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisfaction*. To capture a respondent's objective personal economic situation we use his employment status and his employment class. The liberalisation of the market that goes hand in hand with European

integration benefits people that are relatively well endowed, while it hurts the others, according to human-capital theory (Gabel, 1998). Therefore, unemployed citizens are expected to be more Eurosceptic than those that have work. Concerning the impact of the objective state of the economy, the theory is not as unanimous as for the rest of economic theory. While good economic conditions are assumed to lead to an increase in support for an incumbant president or party, this is only the case when the is clarity of responsibility (Nadeau, Niemi and Yoshinaka, 2002). As Hellwig and Samuels (2007) show, globalisation leads voters to shift responsibility away from national governments, which might lead to an increased peceived responsibility of the EU. Therefore, if there is clarity, citizens in richer countries are expected to be less sceptic. One the other hand, poorer member states usually receive more from the EU budget than they pay in, while it is vice-versa for richer countries. Since we investigate net-payer and receiver countries seperately, we pool the variation resulting from the EU budgetary status of a country in the two samples.

However, since the EU is a supra-national construct that is neither a federal state nor a confederation, it is not reasonable to assume that citizens hold it in the same way responsible for the economic situation of their country as their national governments. This is one reason why the so called national identity theory has been found to be increasingly important in explaining Euroscepticism in most recent studies (Hooghe and Marks, 2005; Van Elsaset al., 2016; Magalhães, 2012b). The increasing scope of EU governance has cause citizens to fear losing their national identity. Political decisions made by the EU take away some of national sovereignt and consequently, citizens that feel strongly attached to their nation should be more eurosceptic than those that do not. This effect should be specifically strong for *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition*, because both refer to transferring more power to the EU. We expect both economic theory and national identity theory to bite in the way described above

in net payer as well as receiver countries, however, economic theory is expected to have a stronger effect in the latter and national identity theory in the former.

Finally, we test wether partisan cues have a significant effect on Euroscepticism. Because of the increasing complexity of European issues it becomes more and more difficult for voters to form an informed opinion. When this is the case research has shown that people tend to follow some form of political authority when asked about these issues (De Vries and Edwards, 2009; Hooghe and Marks, 2005; Steenbergen and Jones, 2002). One such authority is the political party a citizen feels closely attached to as well as the general political environment in his country. A respondent that feels close to a party that opposes further European integration is expected to be more politically eurosceptic and stronger opposed further unification. On the other hand, partisanship with a party that believes its country's membership in the EU is not beneficial is likely to cause a respondent to be more instrumentally Eurosceptic and dissatisfied. Furthermore, the average stance of parties in a specific country is expected to influence voters in that country that are not attached to a particular party. Since *Political Euroscepticism* is the most specific dimension that we are studying, we expect the respondent not to rely on political cues in his answer, while the other dimensions might be influenced.[2]

4. Data & Variables

4.1. Data

The individual level data is retrieved from the European Electorate Study 2014 (EES). It was conducted after the European Parliament election in 2014 in all 28 member states of the European Union. 10 countries are classified as net-payer (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK) and 18 as net-receiver countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia,

[2] See Table 1 of the appendix for a summary of the expectations in payer and receiver countries

Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain). The survey includes observations on a total of 30,064 individuals which, in addition to the country level, are stratified by region per NUTS1 and NUTS2. While NUTS2 comprises 183 regions and NUTS1 only 94, this paper uses the latter, because the finer grained regional classification contains a substantial number of missing values. Country level data was taken from Eurostat and party level data was obtained from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2014.

4.2. Variables

Euroscepticism

The measure for *Instrumental Euroscepticism* is based on the answer to the question whether the respondent's country's membership in the EU is perceived to be 1 "A bad thing", 2 "Neither good nor bad", and 3 "A good thing". In order to get a stable measurement of actual Euroscepticism, this variable was recoded into a binary variable, taking on the value 1 if the respondent thinks that membership is a bad thing and 0 otherwise.

The second dependent variable measures *Political Euroscepticism* in the following way: in the EES respondents were asked to identify the most important issue facing their country at that moment. In the next question, they were asked at what level they think this issue is decided now and at what level it should be decided on in the future. The range goes from "Regional level" over "National level" to "European level". From these answers a binary variable was created, taking on the value 1 if the respondent thinks that the issue should be decided at the regional or national level in the future. In all other cases, it takes on the value 0.

In specifying the other two indicators of Euroscepticism we follow Van Elsas et al. (2016). The third measure captures the respondent's dissatisfaction with the *current* state of the EU. The scale is constructed from two survey items, namely the statements "You trust the institutions of the EU" and "The European parliament takes into consideration the concerns of

European citizens" referring to the question "For each of the following statements, please tell me to what it extent it corresponds or not to your attitude or opinion.". The scale in both cases goes in four steps from "Yes, totally" to "No, not at all". The two items were standardised and have a correlation of 0.63 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 which supports the assumption that the two represent one underlying scale.

Finally, the last dependent variable measures the respondent's support for or opposition to further European unification by relying in the question "European unification has gone too far or should be pushed further". The answer is a scale from full support (0) to no support (10).

Independent Variables

The first three independent variables are our ideological measurements, left/right placement, support for redistributive policies, and opposition to immigration, all measured on a 0 to 10 scale. Furthermore, a dummy variable is included that indicates whether a country is a net payer or receiver.

The first economic independent variable is an index constructed from two survey items; one asking if the respondent or someone in his household has lost his job in the past 12 months and the other whether the respondent or someone in his household has experiences a decrease in income during the same time. The two items have a correlation of 0.46 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.63, which means that one can confidently assume that the two represent the same underlying factor. As (Van Elsas et al. (2016, p. 1189) put it "Combining items that load on the same theoretical sub-dimension, however, will imrpove the reliability and validity of the findings, […].". To give a measure of a respondent's objective economic situation we use a dummy variables for unemployment. The last item is a measure of sociotropic economic perceptions constructed from a retrospective and a prospective survey question (correlation 0.62, alpha 0.76).

For national identity theory the measurement is the respondent's attachment to his own nation and his attachment to the EU, measured on the same four step scale as described before for trust in the EU. Furthermore, a dummy for respondents with a feeling of exclusive national identity was constructed, which requires the lowest possible answer for attachment to the EU and at least three for national attachment to become 1.

Lastly, there are two political and partisan cues. In case a respondent feels close to a certain party, both the EU integration and instrumental cue take on the average value experts have given that party in the CHES 2014. In case a respondent does not feel attached to any party, the country average value is assigned.

All the specified models contain a set of demographic control variables which are age, gender, education (in four categories), and two social class dummies, one for manual workers and one for managers. Furthermore, two controls are added that measure political interest and political sophistication respectively. An individual with more knowledge of the political process can be expected to from more pronounced opinions on complicated matters, which in turn might affect his level of Euroscepticism.

5. Empirical Analysis

The paper employs multi-level mixed effects models to explain each of the four different dependent variables. Random effects are preferred over a pooled fixed effects approach, since they account for inter- and intra-class variation and can be adapted to specifically show the effects of each (see Bartels, 2008). Both *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *Political Euroscepticism* are measured as binary variables, which is why a multi-level logistic model is employed. *EU Dissatisfaction* and *EU Opposition*, on the other hand, are measured on a ten-point scale, so they are modelled with a multi-level linear regression. In all cases, there are three levels, individuals nested in regions and regions nested within countries. There is significant

variation at both the region and the country level for each independent variable. While *EU Opposition* shows no significant variation at the country-level in the three-level model, an LR test suggests that it is preferred over a model that only accounts for variance at the region-level ($p = 0.000$). This analysis was repeated for net-payer and receiver countries separately and there we also find significant variation at all levels (see appendix).

Table 1 shows the four base models and the variance components of each level. Since in both Model 1 and Model 2 the residuals follow a logistic distribution, their variance is approximately $\frac{\pi^2}{3}$. Therefore, the country level accounts for approximately 7.3% of the variance in Model 1 and 3.83% in Model 2. Equivalently, the region level accounts for 2.43% and 2.13%. In Model 3 and Model 4 the figures are similar, 7.42% and 8.53% at the country level and 2.26% and 1.52% at the region level, respectively. It becomes clear that, while there is significant variation between countries and regions, most of the variation in Euroscepticism is accountable to the individual level (90.27%, 94%, 90.31%, and 90.32%).

After establishing significant random coefficients for all four models, we want to find out whether the relationships between ideology and the different dimensions hold that were put forward for net-payer and receiver countries. Table 2 shows the relationship between the four dimensions of Euroscepticism and left/right placement in net-payer countries. As expected, right-wing citizens are significantly more politically eurosceptic and more resistant to unification with the EU than left-wing citizens. What is striking, however, is that they are also significantly more politically eurosceptic and more dissatisfied with the EU. The form of the relationship is as hypothesised, with a curvilinear relationship between left/right placement and *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisfaction* on the one hand, and a positive linear relationship with *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition*. Although the square of ideology is weakly significant for the last dimension of scepticism, Figure 1 shows that the political left is certainly more supportive of unification than the voters at the centre.

Table 3 confirms that the political left is more eurosceptic on all four dimensions of Euroscepticism. There is, however, no evidence that the relationship between left/right placement, the political dimension, and opposition to unification has a curvilinear shape. Only *Instrumental Euroscepticism* seems to be higher on both political extremes, and interestingly in the model for *EU Dissatisfaction* the coefficient of the squared ideology term is highly significant and negative. Since by far most respondents place themselves at the political centre, as can be seen at the histogram in panel b of Figure 1, this means that the general public in net receiver countries is extremely dissatisfied with the EU.

Table 4 shows the results for *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisfaction* in both categories. The first thing that jumps the eye is that the left is significantly less sceptic on both dimensions than the right in receiver countries. Support for redistributive policies is only significant for dissatisfaction and only in receiver countries, supporting the notion that this is particularly important issue in those countries. Opposition to immigration, on the other hand, is significant for both groups and dimensions. This supports our hypothesis that fear of multiculturalism and foreign influences increases negative sentiments towards the EU irrespective of the country. Concerning ideological standpoints, we can clearly say that a more "right-wing worldview" has a larger impact on the instrumental and dissatisfaction dimension in net-payer countries, than in receiver countries.

The results for economic and identity theory are not as clear-cut as expected. First, we see that sociotropic considerations are generally a lot stronger than personal economic hardship, and unemployment status is insignificant altogether. Economic anxiety significantly increases both *Instrumental Euroscepticism* and *EU Dissatisfaction*, as hypothesised, but the effect on the instrumental dimension is a lot larger in both groups. What is unexpected is that the effects are generally more pronounced in payer countries, a finding that is probably due to the

curvilinear nature of the relation between these two dimensions of Euroscepticism and ideology in these countries.

The double-edged character of national identity theory becomes apparent in the table. Many authors have argued that strong attachment to one's nation increases attachment to the EU, while it is also true that nationalistic feelings provoke a negative reaction toward the EU (see Hooghe and Marks, 2005). In our sample attachment to one's nation consistently *decreases* the instrumental and the dissatisfaction dimension, while exclusive national identity is significantly positive throughout, apart from *Instrumental Euroscepticism* in net payer countries. Overall the findings confirm the notion that these two dimensions of scepticism are affected by both economic and national identity considerations, but the former has a stronger effect.

Finally, looking at the effect of political cues, we see that the clue on integration is significantly positive over all categories, while the instrumental cue is completely insignificant. Furthermore, it's the effects are stronger in payer countries for both dimensions. This might be due to a stronger position of political parties on European issues, but ultimately this is a topic of further research.

The results for *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition* are shown in Table 5. Left/right placement is significant and positive for both dimensions in payer countries, which supports the notion that in these countries it is mainly the political right that objects further political EU integration. The political left is significantly more opposed to further unification and support for redistributive policies is significantly positive for both dimensions. This lends support for the hypothesis that the political left in these countries is not only supposed to current EU anymore, but has also lost hope that it is an appropriate organism to put in place social policies favoured by them. Opposition to immigration is highly significant and positive for the opposition dimension, but has only a minor effect on *Political Euroscepticism*. This might be

due to the pooled nature of our measure of this dimension, which does not discern between different policies.

The effect of the sociotropic item of economic theory is as expected weaker for the political dimension, but surprisingly stronger for opposition to further unification than for dissatisfaction in both payer and receiver countries. While this was expected in net-receiver countries, it shows that in both groups voters are making the EU responsible for the economic situation of their country, a fact that might lead to a further disillusionment of the political left. This is further supported by the fact that personal economic anxiety also increases opposition to unification. Furthermore, economic theory only has a significantly positive effect on the political dimension in receiver countries, as expected.

National identity has a strongly positive impact on *Political Euroscepticism* and *EU Opposition* in net-payer countries, while exclusive national identity has no significant impact, meaning that those that feel strongly attached to their nation are no different from those that feel *only* attached to their nation and not the EU. This distinction becomes even clearer in net-receiver countries where national identity is significantly positive for *Political Euroscepticism,* exclusive identity, however, increases the opposition dimension. These findings suggest that in rich European countries citizens that feel strongly nationalistic generally are more sceptic, while in poorer countries people the effect is stronger for those that feel attached to their nation and *not* to the EU, precisely because nationalism generally increases their attachment to the EU as well.

Political cues are insignificant for *Political Euroscepticism,* as expected, which is likely because of the specific nature of the issues at hand here. As for the two dimensions of scepticism in Table 4, the instrumental cue is insignificant altogether. The integration cue, however is significantly positive for opposition to unification in both groups, showing that parties have a significant potential of influencing public opinion on this dimension.

6. Discussion & Conclusion

We set out to find out how motivators of four dimensions of Euroscepticism differ in European countries that have a positive net balance with the EU and those that do not. To our knowledge, no direct comparison between these or any other groups of member states has been done so far, so our findings are the first to point out the immense differences that exist. The most surprising finding is that there is a clear distinction between the political groups that anti-European sentiments stem from. While in net-payer countries it is clearly the ideological right that is on the forefront of Euroscepticism, it is the left in net-receiver countries. More importantly, in the richer countries the left concentrates on opposition to the current EU, but in poorer countries it has appropriated all four dimensions.

This points to serious difficulties for policy makers at the EU. In its early days, the union could count on conservative citizens to support it, because of the liberal market policies it represented. This support has already largely broken away in the richer countries, where conservatives now reject the EU based on identity and cultural considerations. While average Euroscepticism is still lower in poorer countries, our indicator for opposition to immigration shows that there is potential that opposition to the EU from the right-wing will increase in the future. When the disillusionment of the left continues in the Western and Northern countries of the EU, opposition from both ends of the political spectrum might be too strong to overcome.

This study provides a starting point to investigate the differences in public opinion on European integration that could be taken into several directions. For once comparing how all four dimensions of Euroscepticism evolve in both groups over time is crucial, since opposition from the right is expected to rise in receiver countries. Our analysis is based on data from 2014 and it is highly likely that scepticism has increased already, after the peak of the “refugee crisis” in 2015. Furthermore, the relationship between the willingness to transfer political power to the European level and ideology in the two country groups should be looked at in more detail.

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Appendix

Table 1 – Variance components

Variables	Instrumental Euroscepticism	Political Euroscepticism	EU Dissatisfaction	EU Opposition
Constant	-1.897***	0.196**	2.552***	5.318***
	(0.104)	(0.078)	(0.044)	(0.182)
Variance(country)	0.242***	0.126***	0.046***	0.831
	(0.078)	(0.048)	(0.014)	(0.243)
Variance(region)	0.080***	0.070***	0.014***	0.148***
	(0.024)	(0.019)	(0.003)	(0.040)
Variance(residual)			0.560***	8.760***
			(0.005)	(0.078)
Model	ME logistic	ME logistic	ME ML	ME ML
N(respondents)	25222	25222	25222	25222
N(regions)	28	28	28	28
N(countries)	94	94	94	94
Log-Likelihood	-9984.602	-16902.61	-28590.852	-63259.284

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 2 – Net-payer countries

Variables	Instrumental Euroscepticism	Political Euroscepticism	EU Dissatisfaction	EU Opposition
Ideology	0.151***	0.091***	0.031***	0.276***
	(0.031)	(0.024)	(0.008)	(0.032)
Ideology^2	0.144***	-0.029	0.024***	0.060*
	(0.026)	(0.020)	(0.007)	(0.027)
Constant	-1.924***	0.216	2.534***	5.774***
	(0.160)	(0.111)	(0.062)	(0.196)
Model	ME logistic	ME logistic	ME ML	ME ML
N(respondents)	9181	9181	9181	9181
N(regions)	56	56	56	56
N(countries)	10	10	10	10
Log-Likelihood	-3673.47	-6192.037	-9982.649	-22311.04

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 1 – Predicted values of scepticism based on left/right placement

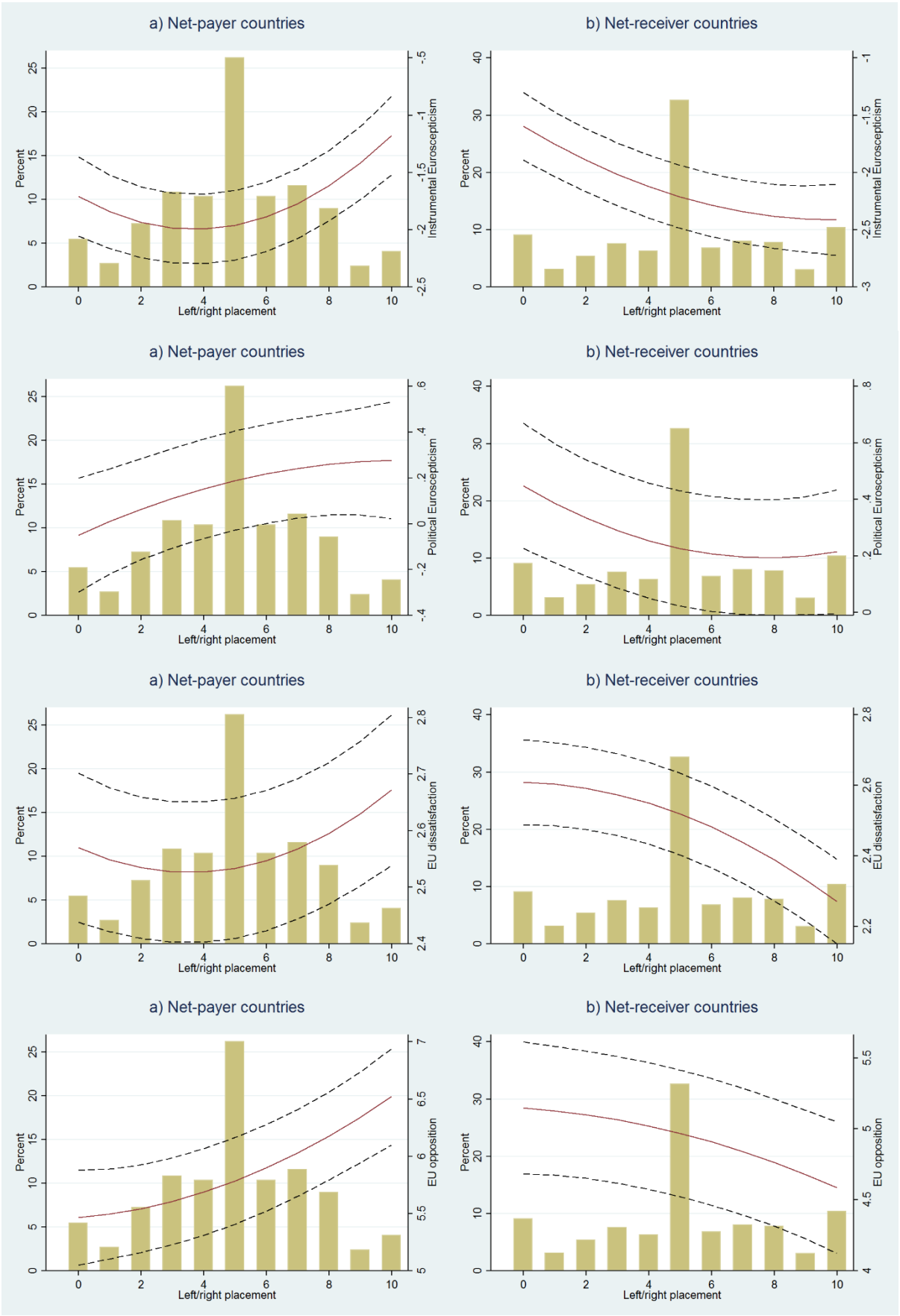

Table 3 – Net-receiver countries

Variables	Instrumental Euroscepticism	Political Euroscepticism	EU Dissatisfaction	EU Opposition
Ideology	-0.202***	-0.047**	-0.088***	-0.148***
	(0.027)	(0.018)	(0.006)	(0.026)
Ideology^2	0.060**	0.021	-0.023***	-0.024
	(0.021)	(0.014)	(0.005)	(0.020)
Constant	-2.189***	0.246*	2.508***	4.952***
	(0.135)	(0.103)	(0.058)	(0.229)
Model	ME logistic	ME logistic	ME ML	ME ML
N(respondents)	12259	12259	12259	12259
N(regions)	38	38	38	38
N(countries)	18	18	18	18
Log-Likelihood	-4385.194	-8143.876	-13808.844	-31038.291

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 4 – Instrumental Euroscepticism and EU Dissatisfaction

Variables	Instrumental Euroscepticism		EU Dissatisfaction	
	Net-payer	Net-receiver	Net-payer	Net-receiver
Ideology				
Ideology	0.004	-0.111***	-0.011	-0.040***
	(0.042)	(0.033)	(0.008)	(0.006)
Redistribution	-0.012	0.038	0.003	0.023***
	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Immigration	0.270***	0.104**	0.062***	0.017**
	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Economic theory				
Economic anxiety	0.046	0.107**	0.042***	0.019**
	(0.040)	(0.035)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Unemployed	0.099	0.125	-0.008	0.006
	(0.112)	(0.096)	(0.019)	(0.018)
National econ. perception	0.416***	0.413***	0.106***	0.101***
	(0.043)	(0.036)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Identity theory				
Attachment nation	-0.023	-0.178***	-0.072***	-0.040**
	(0.070)	(0.054)	(0.015)	(0.012)
Attachment EU	-1.022***	-0.784***	-0.356***	-0.362***
	(0.042)	(0.037)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Exclusive identity	0.053	0.285*	0.095**	0.089***
	(0.153)	(0.131)	(0.031)	(0.027)
Political cues				
Party cue integration	0.416**	0.218*	0.072**	0.071***
	(0.161)	(0.108)	(0.025)	(0.019)
Party cue instrumental	-0.053	0.059	0.02	0.015
	(0.146)	(0.102)	(0.024)	(0.019)
Constant	-2.360***	-2.269***	2.463***	2.408***

	(0.290)	(0.232)	(0.053)	(0.055)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Model	ME logistic	ME logistic	ME ML	ME ML
N(respondents)	8561	10733	8561	10733
N(regions)	56	38	56	38
N(countries)	10	18	10	18
Log-Likelihood	-2665.87	-3269.528	-7431.988	-9753.799

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 5 – Political Euroscepticism and EU Opposition

Variables	Political Euroscepticism		EU Opposition	
	Net-payer	Net-receiver	Net-payer	Net-receiver
Ideology				
Ideology	0.064*	-0.028	0.085**	-0.076**
	(0.027)	(0.020)	(0.032)	(0.028)
Redistribution	-0.003	0.068**	0.034	0.083**
	(0.026)	(0.021)	(0.031)	(0.029)
Immigration	0.064*	0.015	0.571***	0.262***
	(0.025)	(0.021)	(0.030)	(0.030)
Economic theory				
Economic anxiety	0.005	-0.02	0.102***	0.064*
	(0.026)	(0.022)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Unemployed	0.036	0.094	0.003	-0.047
	(0.070)	(0.061)	(0.082)	(0.085)
National econ. perception	0.061*	0.138***	0.289***	0.262***
	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.033)	(0.032)
Identity theory				
Attachment nation	0.190***	0.115**	0.257***	-0.071
	(0.055)	(0.042)	(0.065)	(0.059)
Attachment EU	-0.254***	-0.081***	-0.818***	-0.570***
	(0.028)	(0.024)	(0.032)	(0.033)
Exclusive identity	-0.149	0.066	0.011	0.278*
	(0.110)	(0.092)	(0.130)	(0.129)
Political cues				
Party cue integration	0.107	0.041	0.464***	0.245**
	(0.091)	(0.064)	(0.107)	(0.091)
Party cue instrumental	-0.074	-0.019	-0.15	0.008
	(0.084)	(0.064)	(0.100)	(0.091)
Constant	-0.121	-0.255	5.881***	4.646***
	(0.182)	(0.166)	(0.238)	(0.286)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Model	ME logistic	ME logistic	ME ML	ME ML
N(respondents)	8561	10733	8561	10733
N(regions)	56	38	56	38
N(countries)	10	18	10	18
Log-Likelihood	-5681.047	-7015.003	-19775.631	-26701.254

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001